6-1-00

Bethinking Of Old Orleans

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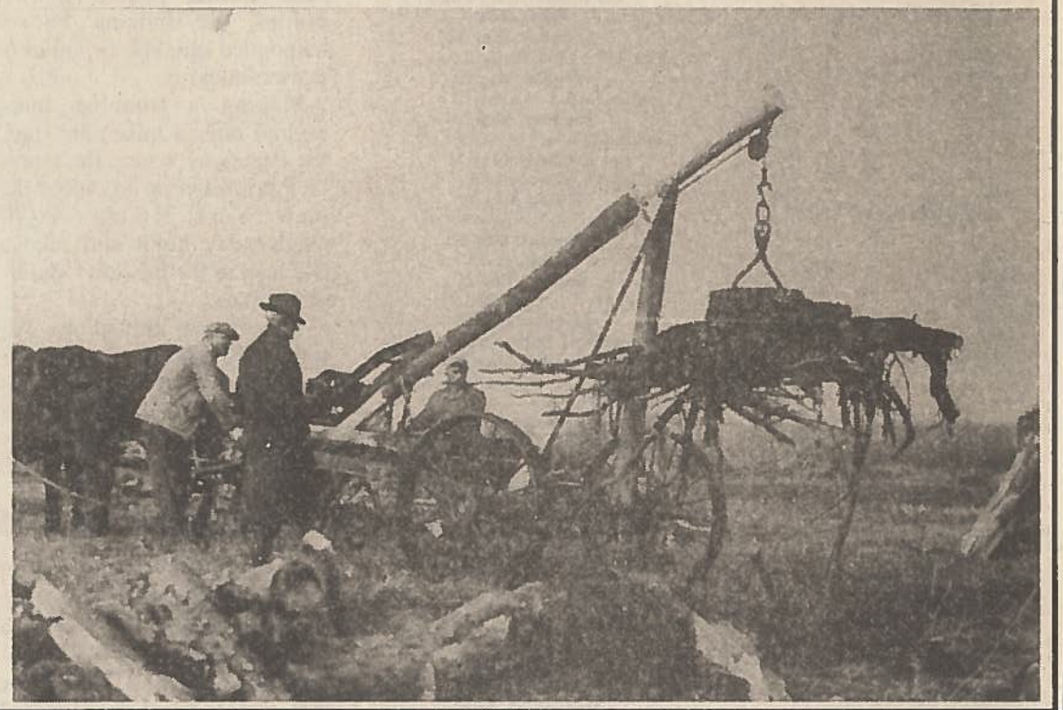
PULLING STUMPS IN KENDALL

Before modern day earth moving equipment like bulldozers, getting rid of stumps was a real dilemma. They were a perpetual problem for our pioneer settlers. Once the virgin timber was cut or even burned, the stumps remained as obstacles in the way. The pioneers used oxen and various contrived devices to pull them out.

Our photo shown here, taken around seventy years ago, shows a stump puller in use near Morton. The men in the picture are Earl Buck, Jim Bissell and Walter Colburn. This was a home-made stump puller perfected by Earl Buck.

The 1930 Niagara-Orleans County Directory lists Earl Buck as living on the County Line Road, Morton. The directory also lists James H. Bissell (Murphy & Bissell) RFD Morton, N.Y. I find no listing for Colburn. Murphy & Bissell are listed in 1930 as Frank J. Murphy and James E. Bissell - operators of an evaporator in Morton, N.Y.

Judging from what I can see in this photo, my guess is that they are pulling apple tree stumps. Perhaps this was after the great freeze of 1934 when many apple orchards were ruined because the temperature dropped so low. This caused the sap in the trees to freeze making them burst or split open. Our photo shows this stump pulled under the operation of horse power to the far left. At this time, apple trees would have been sawed up and used for fuel wood in stoves or furnaces. Two men on a cross cut saw was the norm before the chain saw came into use. Oh yes, "The good ole days."

Next Cemetery Tour

On Saturday, June 17 at 11 a.m. a guided walking tour of Beechwood Cemetery will take place. Beechwood is located two miles north of Rt. 18 on the east side of the West Kendall Road at the corner of Woodchuck Alley in the Town of Kendall.